

## **Theory of Destination in Borges A Transcurssive Approach**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this work was to search for a pattern that would describe the fictional reality that supports the Borgian universe. For this, the basic methodological precepts of the Transcurssive Logic were followed. Once the fundamental elements that structure this purely subjective reality were identified, it was proposed as a working hypothesis to address a supposed “theory of destiny” that emerges from the analysis of some of his stories, applying the found pattern. It is also important to highlight that, as can be seen in all the figures used for this example, the elements of a PAU are given, which confirms that in Borges, the budget is unity, while the problem, perhaps circumstantial, is limited to try to explain the changing appearances of what is essentially unchanged. This hypothesis is confirmed by the conjunction of antithetical characters and the support of the “eternal return” in a subjective and cyclical time, although, without losing in any case, the explicit relationship with a “real” referent. These are the fundamental bases of the Transcurssive Logic.

**Keywords:** Jorge Luis Borges, Structure of a story, Literary models, Transcurssive Logic.

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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Among the many Spanish-speaking exponents in the fiction genre, we will take what in our opinion is the leading name of fantastic production: Jorge Luis Borges. An antirealist

who, with the elegance of the classics, led us on the ‘intellectual’ paths of a reasoned imagination that privileges psychological arguments less than situations. However, the brilliant aesthetic exercise with which he discredited the real world, bringing us up to date with the disorder and the nonsense of a hallucinatory world, was not an obstacle so that, at the same time, he left us the ambiguity of his fantastic fictions and the oxymoron of an infinite temporality that defines, and very well, subjective reality.

Because Borges, finally, was a realist who managed to subvert the prevailing idealism by swapping it for a subjective vision, despite the apparent 'rationality' of his speculations, is that we take it as one of the best practical examples of the application of the principles of the Transcursive Logic (TL) (Salatino, 2017). We will try to unravel his ‘theory of destiny’.

## 2.0. ANALYSIS OF REALITY IN BORGES

Since ancient times, the human being has been a tireless seeker of sense. What happens and impacts it, plunges it into ignorance; just like the first-hand known, like death, in despair. Why things are the way they are, has sleepless his nights and shortened his days. No one has ever known where we came from and where we are going. The human psyche also can generate ideas and experiences that cannot be rationally explained (Armstrong, 2008, p. 5).

Borges, in his stories, solved the immeasurable gap that exists between reality and reason. Having assumed that the first reality is the reason, it was a Greek boldness that does not share. Borges determined that reality is a mystery; when it manifests it is only a sign or appearance of what, by its very nature, is hidden (Tamayo and Ruiz Díaz, 1955, p. 136). Borges, then, approaches reality from the subject, and for him, it is the only thing there is the rest is mere illusion.

The stories take place in this contrasting and nuanced reality for a cyclical time (Figure 1).

Fig. 1. PAU OF REALITY IN THE BORGES STORIES

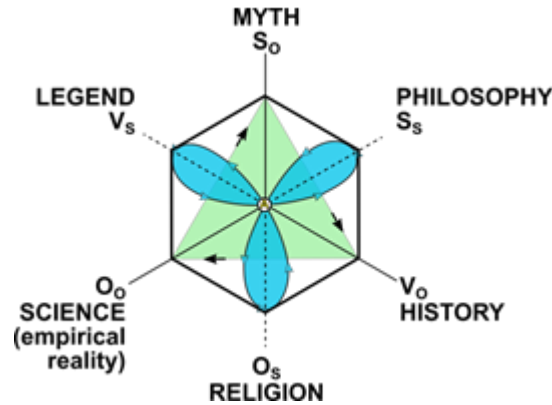


We see in the previous diagram that the real facts are present, but they are opposed to a fiction that is also ‘real’. The empirical and the unreal are assembled in an oscillating movement, found a story that aspires to be eternal, that is, timeless. This universal autonomous pattern (PAU) (Salatino, 2009) integrates a magical universe but at the same time, so human that it takes fate to flower of skin, fleeting perhaps, but authentic.

The previous approach is resolved by intertwining in the dialectic of human manifestations, those that, producing a kind of messianic wonder, appear as supernatural or sacred, but founders of a utopian world so favorable as possible (Figure 2).

**Fig. 2. PAU OF THE REAL MANIFESTATIONS IN BORGES**

References:  $S_o$ : objective subject -  $O_o$ : objective object  $V_o$ : apparent transformation -  $S_s$ : subjective subject  
 $O_s$ : subjective object -  $V_s$ : hidden transformation



In perfect harmony with what was proposed by the TL, in the world of Borges, the subject's 'split' identity captures in itself all the real manifestations, although with some orientalist nuance, which intertwining the subjective and the objective in a supernatural enigma, wraps it up in the story, subjecting it to a circular time.

In the 'realistic' Borges there is a marked tendency towards the legendary. "The legendary - he says - recreates reality in a way that is only accidentally false" (*Formas de una leyenda*, 1952, p. 180).

Another of the very real features that characterize the aesthetic plasticity in these stories is the 'eternal return'. Supported by Marco Aurelio (*El tiempo circular*, 1936, p. 176), among many others, he affirms in unison:

"Always keep in mind, therefore, these two things: one, that everything has always been presented in the same way and describes the same circles, and it does not matter that the same thing is contemplated for a hundred years, two hundred or an indefinite time; the other, that the one who has lived the longest and the one who will die most prematurely, suffer the same loss. Because we can only be deprived of the present since it is only you possess, and what you do not possess, you cannot lose" (*Meditations*, Book II, 14, p. 65).

The faithful witness of the 'eternal return' is and expresses it in the words of Marco Aurelio, the 'eternal present', which indicates precisely the same origin and the same aspect. The past is the present of memory and the future is the present of hopes and fears (Williamson, 2013, p. 10). In these temporal archetypes, in all equivalents to the PAU defined by the TL, however universal, it represents the vicissitudes of becoming, which unfold in an illusory and trivial time (Figure 3), although not for that reason, less subjective (*Nueva refutación del tiempo*, 1952).

**Fig. 3. PAU OF THE LIFE AVATARS**

References:  $\oplus$ : XOR -  $\odot$ : XNOR -  $\tilde{\odot}$ : XNOR/XOR -  $\tilde{\oplus}$ : XOR/XNOR

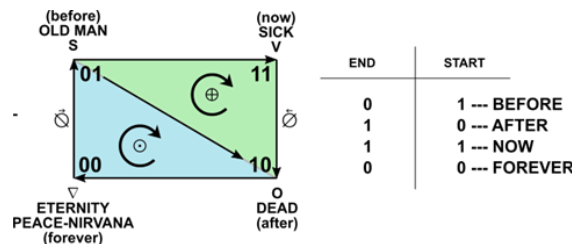
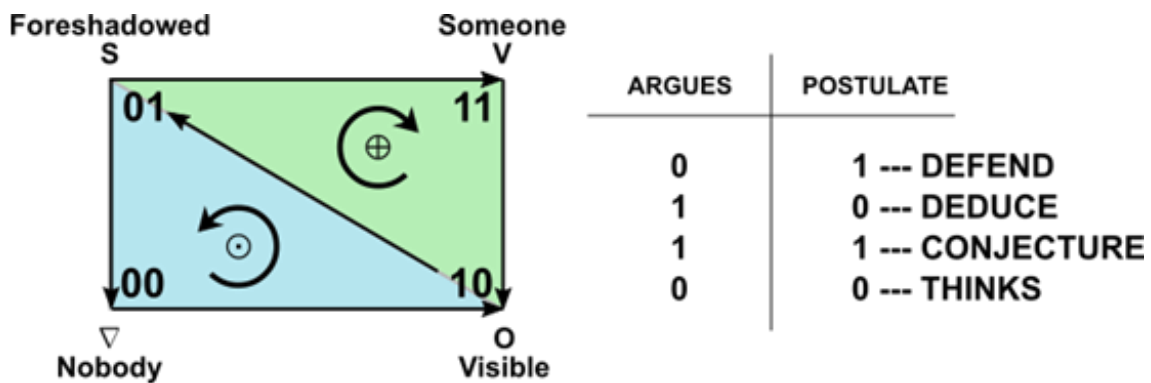


Figure 3, using an endogenous hemicyclic PAU (Salatino, 2019) tells us, with an oriental air, that the subject shortly after birth (time = 0), is formerly an old man, later to be a dead object; only eventually and due to illness, this fatality can take a moment to manifest. When the present is lost, there is only room for the peace that eternity grants. Then the cycle begins again.

The oriental texts to which Borges so frequently adheres, especially Hindus, show that the purpose of art, as it happens with subjectivity, is not an expression of reality limited to our senses, but a suggestion of what transcends it. through indirect manifestations [the  $\nabla$  of the TL]. The point is not just explaining but to suggest. Borges' stories masterfully manage the suggestion for characterize their real characters (Figure 4).

**Fig. 4 PAU OF THE CHARACTERS**

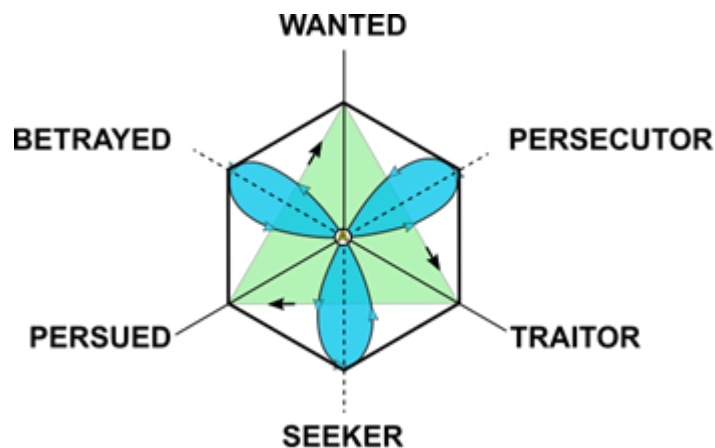
References:  $\oplus$ : XOR -  $\odot$ : XNOR



The characters in Borges' stories reveal a diffuse, ambiguous, and even ethereal identity. The name of the 'visible' character can hardly ever be known by deduction or failing that, one can only forebode his existence. These indefinite subjects can be reduced to "someone" by mere conjecture, or be represented in the processes they go through, which generally do not reach to be assigned to anyone.

The circumstantial circularity of almost anonymous characters manages to become an index of reality that is beyond appearances, just like in TL. With this of a confused air style, Borges manages to strengthen the identity of the observer and the observed, to describe subjective reality (Figure 5).

**Fig. 5 PAU OF THE HETERARCHIC PAIRS**



Heterarchy or simultaneity is used as a philosophical and even religious argument. The previous figure suggests that these “opposing pairs”, which respond to the observer / observed matrix, they have antithetical destinies, as we will see in the next point.

### 3.0. DESTINY THEORY

Having briefly characterized what Borges understands by ‘reality’, we will try to approach from the TL a supposed theory of destiny, which arises from the analysis of some of his stories. We have based ourselves on the best and first analysis that has been made of the work and the Borgian style, I refer to “Borges, enigma y clave” (Tamayo and Ruiz Díaz, 1955). From this magnificent book its Chapter V: Theory of Destiny has been taken as a reference. There we are shown, when comparing some stories, that it is possible to detect a luck of generic way that, as a structural principle, offers a set of mutually conditioned characteristics.

The conception that Borges offers us about the destiny of his characters and, ultimately, of man in general, is based, not on an unavoidable fatality, but on the fleeting moment in which his history is defined.

*"Any destination, however long and complicated it may be, actually consists of a single moment in which man knows, forever, who he is"* (Biografía de Tadeo Isidoro Cruz, El Aleph).

According to the Borgian vision, there are two aspects that we can highlight, that traversing life heterogeneously, determine a semblance. On the one hand, the structuring moments, and on the other, the functional conflict between utopian reality and historical truth.

The three comparative stories are:

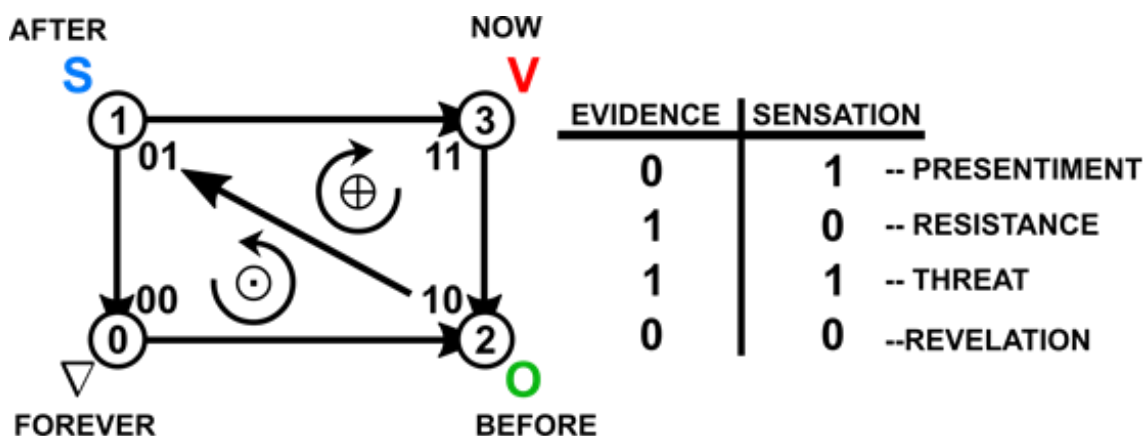
- El acercamiento a Almotásim (*Historia de la eternidad* - 1936)
- Tema del traidor y del héroe (*Ficciones* - 1944)
- Biografía de Tadeo Isidoro Cruz (*El Aleph* - 1949)

In the stories listed, as in almost any other story by Borges, three moments (which are in reality four) can be individualized (Figure 6).

These moments can be manifested either explicitly through evidence, or implicitly through sensation. Also, they can do it through the union or organization of the above situations, or failing that, without their participation. A first moment (1) (01) that affects the subject (S) where the feeling arises that something is going to happen soon.

**Fig. 6 PAU OF THE STRUCTURING MOMENTS OF DESTINATION**

References:  $\oplus$ : XOR -  $\odot$ : XNOR



A second moment ② (10) that involves objects (O) and denotes the resistance that the surrounding things and the other men seem to show, in advance, so that a still dark and eventual presentiment is not fulfilled. Ruiz Díaz rightly points it out in the three stories: “... the Muslim student from the night he stabs a stranger (or thinks he has killed him); Kilpatrick's betrayals before they were discovered; the adventures of Tadeo Isidoro Cruz after the night that he guesses that the city and he will always be mutually hostile.”

A third moment 11 (11) of evident transformations (V) that conspire to constitute a current threat to the life of the subject, who, considering himself overcome by the opposition that the surrounding environment inflicts, suspects the imminent fulfillment of a very gloomy omen. Again, Ruiz Díaz illustrates how Borges poses this third moment: “... the student reaches the last stage of his rapprochement; Kilpatrick acknowledges his betrayal; Cruz, finally, a man who cannot read, deciphers with blinding intuitive force the instantaneous symbol that the night of fighting holds for him.”

Breaks into a fourth moment ① (00), sudden, opposite, and complementary, a hidden transformation (∇) that, like an instant revelation, will forever capture the fate (history) of the subject. Ruiz Díaz puts it this way: “... the student disappears called by the remote light that has mysteriously guided his pilgrimage; Kilpatrick begs to sign his death sentence on the condition that compliance with it serves the liberation of Ireland; Cruz, he sees himself fully identified in the deserter Martín Fierro and, faithful to the premonition of his enmity with the city, accept, with happy courage, his stormy destiny.” The entire previous process ends up articulating with the other element proposed by Borges as a determinant of a destination; that is, a conflictive situation that is resolved through a function: the passage to a legend, despite the memory and forgetfulness that conspire against the symbolism of a narrative, trying to impose a concrete existence. This insertion in the legend means, after all, the fulfillment of a destiny anticipated by the revelation.

Let us see why the conflict arises between a utopian reality and what is considered, as evident, the historical truth (Figure 7).

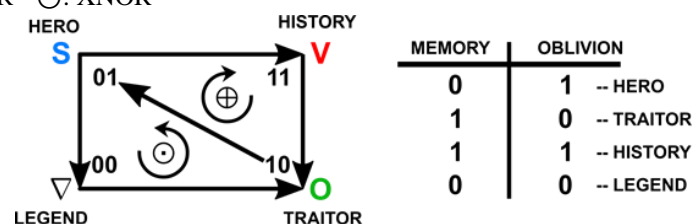
The moments described above give structural support to a function, to a projection of that structure in another structure. The latter, unlike the previous one, which it is of temporary nature, presents a linkage of relationships that reveal a destiny that is that of an individual, but at the same time, that of everyone.

The true conflict raised by Borges occurs between time and destiny, but he projects it allegorically, in his stories, in legend and history, as well as in myth and religion, or philosophy, and science. The peculiarity of this projection is in representing a profound reconciliation of opposites that ends up manifesting itself in a temporal bifurcation that takes on dimensions of a fabulous chronological divorce.

It is actually, and Borges notoriously emphasizes it, of a diversification of time that occurs within the subject, thereby confirming what has already been advanced. A subjective vision of reality that is settled in the contraposition of a chronological, external time of no duration and an internal, cyclical time that lasts until the precise 'now' when it meets chronological time, or the instant where the destination is defined, as stated by the TL.

**Fig. 7 PAU OF THE CONFLICT BETWEEN REALITY AND TRUTH**

References: ⊕: XOR - ⊙: XNOR



In the previous figure we can see arranged in opposition to the hero (the betrayed) and the traitor but cohabiting in the same subject. Thus, memory and forgetfulness are the architects of these antithetical faces. The equivalent could be shown in the case of "El acercamiento a Almotásim", between the seeker and the wanted, or, in "Biografía de Tadeo Isidoro Cruz", between the persecutor and the persecuted.

The traitor is defined by the memory that is kept of the acts committed. Facts justified by the supposed fight against the resistances before their eventual fate devised by the other men through the evil use of things.

The hero, on the other hand, arises from forgetting those committed acts. Memory and forgetting to conspire to erect a story, the apparent story where there is reliable evidence of the betrayal that conditions its destiny. An instant is plenty of time to reverse the situation. He agrees to pay for his betrayal, but in a veiled way, so that he falls into oblivion and thus gives body to the hero who becomes part of a legend, of a fictitious reality that, without transgressing the historical truth, will become a traitor when meeting again with their own story.

Ruiz Díaz, leave a record in the three stories of the solution to this conflict, as we saw in the fourth moment already consigned, but, also, he points out that destiny is configured in intrinsic reciprocity with the legend in many of his other stories. In correspondence with the "Theme of the traitor and the hero", although the tradition showed a paradigmatic and respected profile; Borges highlights the traitor (memory) that the legend omits (forgetfulness), in evident opposition, complementarity, and concurrence.

#### **4.0. CONCLUSIONS**

In the rapid incursion, we have made in this work, of the monumental, complex, work of Jorge Luis Borges, we were able to glimpse that, in reality, it is not based on considering nature as mere illusion, or perhaps, with veiling its obvious subjective aspects, but through becoming a story, and the 'learning' or embodying a hero. Borges thus rescued, to elaborate his writings, part of the Hindu thought:

*"The belief that the universe is varied without limits, simultaneous and where all possibilities can exist without being excluded" (O'Flaherty, 2004, p. II).*

The support sought in a 'symbol' to allude to Hindu culture, allows Borges to combine worship and rite, or suggest the passage from profane to sacred, or from illusory to real, or from man to divinity, or from ignorance to knowledge, or from death to life, and, therefore, the grasp of truth (Eliade, 1980, p. 14).

A not minor detail is that he does use real characters in his stories, or at least, refers to events that occurred in the place where the story supposedly takes place. This is the case, for example, in "The rapprochement to Almotásim", where, with the year in which the alleged police novel was published, it alludes to the revolt that was affecting India at the time due to the separation between Muslims and Hindus. In the "Theme of the traitor and the hero", he rescued the true hero of the battle of Junín (Peru, March 6, 1824), who was his great-grandfather, Colonel Manuel Isidoro Suárez. The same occurs in "Biography of Tadeo Isidoro Cruz", where he mentions details and places that are directly related to his ancestors and their performances in the revolutionary feat (Blaustein, 2012, p. 95).

It is also important to highlight that, as can be seen in all the figures used for this example, the elements of a PAU are given, which confirms that in Borges, the budget is unity, while the problem, perhaps circumstantial, is limited to try to explain the changing appearances of what is essentially unchanged. This hypothesis is confirmed by the

conjunction of antithetical characters and the support of the "eternal return" in a subjective and cyclical time. These are the fundamental bases of the Transcursive Logic.



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